



cats, though probably no worse than the humans, speaking of which, the Tarbrax Village Panto, Nativity, and Bonfire night all went well, with no fatalities or tantrums. There's life in the little community yet, though the church has now closed leaving us with just the village hall and a bus shelter, (though no bus,) to meet in. Still, a good power-cut usually brings everybody out, generally with snow shovels, and we all find out who has quietly moved in or out since the last power-cut.

Well, have a festive time, and a prosperous New Year, I hope this thing works, isn't too weird, and is legible.

Our new email address is jim@jimhewlett.com and Irregular updates are on jimhewlett.com where I'll even put this on the internet click christmascard.html and you can see it the right way up.

Love from Jim and Fiona

Merry Christmas to one and all Here's our first attempt at an emailed Christmas card / newsletter, so some of it will be an explanation. Frankly with the ever increasing costs of postage stamps, and the increasing number of computers, it was a case of restricting it to a few immediate family or going electronic, mostly sending by wire and posting to anybody who doesn't have a computer. If you want you can print them and stick them on the mantelpiece, or just look at them on the computer screen. I know it looks a bit mean, but at ten bob a time, the cost of card sending is getting excessive and if everybody prints what they receive then the result will actually be more personal than the usual "Happy Christmas from all of us to all of you". You can even add a signature. This 'card' is intended to be folded, which is why it looks a bit back to front when it is unfolded, a bit like the old air-mail letters.

Getting back to the Christmas Greetings and general news, apart from dropping the odd tree, the Hoolidoo in Winchester, and buying an extra house. (just a small one.)

we've actually had a relatively quiet year, with visits to Skye, Cornwall and Devon. The last two are 400 miles south and they say that 100 miles south takes you a month toward summer. Well, we live 1000 feet up as well so I guess that counts for a bit of the difference too. It was certainly a shock to return to frosts. (There's a sort of falling slush now, warmer but wet.)

Fiona has been organizing the garden for Winter and the field, or wood now really since the trees are 15 years old, is looking a bit subdued. In Spring it looks and sounds quite impressive, with birds making quite a racket. Her latest addition is half a dozen rare or unusual apple trees which should vary from the usual supermarket stuff. One, a James Grieve, looked a bit worried when I caused it to be run over by a lorry loaded with soil, but it seems to have survived.

The season for a traditional roaring fire is here, The large ash tree that was threatening the garage is helping with that. They have taken to the wood burner with enthusiasm, and you can judge the heat by the distance the cats lie at. although they still prefer to dry their paws on our clothes first. Perverse things